



AETC Bases News Clips

Altus AFB, OK



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Altus Air Force Base

Altus Air Force Base is the only Air Force facility for basic C-17 crew training.

"This fact makes Altus unique and an essential focus in the operation of national defense," Inhofe said.

Altus AFB currently possesses 10 C-17's and is expected to receive its 11th sometime later this year. Inhofe will tour the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III production facility and discuss the current success of the aircraft in its role as a global support wing for the U.S. armed forces.

Inhofe also examined the development of the Future Combat System's integration at Boeing's Battlefield Integration Center in California. The Battlefield Integration Center is designed as a proving ground for demonstrating increased combat effectiveness achieved through network-centric operations.

"Through briefings and participation in an interactive simulated ground battle, I have witnessed the increased efficiency, coordination and communication that comes from a networked force like the Future Combat System," Inhofe said. "I am confident that with the further development of FCS we will increase both the lethality and safety of our troops."

The Altus Times

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AETC Bases News Clips

KEESLER AFB, MS



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Posted on Mon, Feb. 23, 2004

CLEANUP

'Watchdog' receives award

By GREG HARMAN

BILOXI - It's been seven years since the Restoration Advisory Board was created to oversee the cleanup of decades-old hazardous landfills at Keesler Air Force Base.

Made up of state and federal employees, Keesler officials and a number of concerned citizens, the group has had its share of disagreements.

Today, the remains of their work are gently rolling golfing lanes where there had been slowly leaking military waste pits. One man who helped it happen, James Black, founder of the Center for Environmental and Economic Justice in Biloxi and self-titled "citizen watchdog," was honored last week by Keesler officials and state and federal environmental regulators for his long-term commitment as community co-chair.

Lisa Noble, an environmental engineer at Keesler, thanked Black for his "probing questions" as she shook his hand. Robert Pope, lead project manager with the regional EPA office, shared the sentiment and a handshake.

Although Black, owner and operator of two gospel radio stations and bishop of a group of nondenominational churches around town, said he was brought up to "distrust" agencies like the EPA. The years have taught him a few things.

"What happens is you get to know the individuals a little bit," he said. "You do learn to trust individuals."

Pope said the two older landfills that had been built in salt marsh had been recapped with extensive monitoring equipment set up to keep tabs on the contents. The \$8.6 million cleanup on the two landfills was intended to protect Back Bay from leaching chemical pollutants, Noble said.

All in all, Black said he is satisfied with the work done at Keesler, where 10 acres of golfing greens have been extended to cover the old site of Landfill Three. But he's also got other tasks ahead keeping his mind busy. Black's environmental group, which has been busy offering health surveys targeted at determining potential lead and dioxin exposures in a low-income community, recently received its second \$15,000 environmental justice small grant from the EPA.

In the coming year, the group will expand its mission of semiannual workshops and routine surveys to test homes for lead contamination and take more critical looks at dioxin exposures that may be occurring along the Turkey Creek Watershed.

"He has just been outstanding," Noble said of Black. "He has really helped us."

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AETC Bases News Clips

LUKE AFB, AZ



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Unnatural proposal

Our stand: Storing natural gas
near Luke base is a bad idea

El Paso Natural Gas Co. wants to store huge amounts of natural gas in vast underground salt caverns on the Valley's west side. Just about everybody who lives or works in the area thinks it's a bad idea.

It would be wrong to dismiss the opposition as NIMBY-ism run amok. This is a united coalition that includes cities across the West Valley, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, Luke Air Force Base, landowners and state lawmakers.

They believe the proposed storage facility would:

- Pose too great a safety risk in an urban environment.

- Jeopardize Luke's mission as the nation's premier training facility for F-16 fighter pilots at a time when Luke faces the next round of base closings.

Within this Iron Curtain of Resistance there's a tacit understanding that there may be a need for natural gas storage. After all, the Valley's growth curve is high; merchant power plants are going in; natural gas is a proven fuel source; and residential demands for electric power will keep rising.

According to El Paso, the proposed project on land the company owns would increase the availability of supplies and customers would not have to reserve extra pipeline capacity. When surges in demand hit, the gas could be removed, and at a lower cost than if purchased on the spot market. It's a rational argument buttressed by the firm's projection that natural gas demand will grow by 50 percent over the next 15 years.

But El Paso is not the only company looking at the Valley to expand. According to the Arizona Corporation Commission, other firms are planning new pipe-

lines to capitalize on the region's burgeoning growth.

El Paso officials insist the proposed Copper Eagle facility would be safe and the site is ideal geologically. It's also not far from El Paso's main east-west pipeline.

"We've learned a lot since Carlsbad," says El Paso spokesman Mel Scott, "to make sure nothing like that happens again." Four years ago, 12 campers lost their lives in New Mexico when a gas line ruptured, and West Valley opponents such as Avondale Mayor Ron Drake remain unconvinced about company pronouncements. "Weird stuff happens," he says.

The proposed facility, we believe, would be in the wrong location. It's smack in the middle of the West Valley's growth path. It's within a mile of Luke, its base housing, hospital and Luke Elementary School, and a 36-inch pipeline would cross the base's Accident Potential Zone, where fighter jets sometimes crash.

An independent risk analysis revealed that under certain climate conditions, a gas leak of 7 percent of the 9.6 billion cubic feet capacity could produce an explosive plume covering an area of 2.8 miles which, according to Rusty Mitchell, chief of Luke's community initiatives team, would "cover the entire base."

Though El Paso officials have quietly been meeting with stakeholders, one by

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LUKE AFB, AZ



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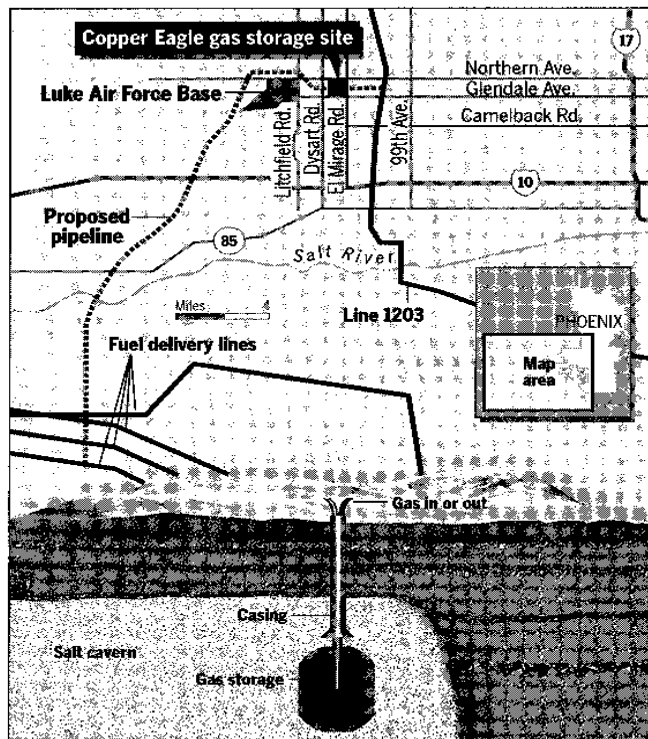
one cities have been passing resolutions against the project. The county supervisors have done so, too. And state Rep. John Nelson, R-Glendale, has introduced legislation that would prohibit large natural gas storage facilities within three miles of a city, airport or military airport.

This is a strong line-up, one that ought to give El Paso strong pause. But in matters such as these, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will have the final say.

We hope the process doesn't get that far. We hope that El Paso will look elsewhere — away from populated areas — to store its natural gas. There are salt caverns in other parts of Arizona. It makes little sense to pursue this project in this location. It's too risky.

Gas storage cavern

Gas can be stored cheaply in salt caverns, and salt is a good storage medium for natural gas, but opponents of the proposed facility don't think it should be placed in that location.



Sources: Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission, El Paso Natural Gas Co.
Dan Kempton/The Arizona Republic

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AETC Bases News Clips

Sheppard AFB, TX



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Investigators complete rape allegation review

Group will analyze information found on assault cases, procedure

By Lee B. Weaver
Times Record News
February 21, 2004

Air Force investigators wrapped up their weeklong review of sexual assault allegations at Sheppard Air Force Base Friday and turned their focus to analyzing the information they gathered, the team's leader said.

Col. K.C. McClain, who led the 22-person detachment from the Air Education Training and Training Command, said the group spent the week examining the procedures Sheppard had in place to prevent and report sexual assaults.

The team conducted individual and group interviews, speaking to about 1,000 people, to get a sense of the climate at the base, said McClain, AETC deputy director of operations at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio.

"We gathered a lot of information," she said.

Investigators assured personnel information from the interviews would be kept in confidence, McClain said. Still, the interviewees - particularly the student population - were "very refreshing to talk to ... and quite candid," she said.

A number of students interviewed didn't even know why the investigative team was in town, McClain said.

"Some of them didn't know (about the assault allegations) until their parents called after seeing it on the national news," she said.

A temporary hot line set up at the base for people wanting to talk to about sexual assault issues got two calls during the week - one from a past victim at the base whose case was successfully resolved - McClain said.

A separate toll-free hot line - 1-888-351-9477 - will be in operation for the next six months.

Team members also spoke to community members involved in the issue.

Xochitl Pruitt, program director at First Step Women's Shelter and Sexual Assault Counseling, said her talks with the team were very informative.

"We were able to kind of give them an insight into what we do," Pruitt said. "They were very empathetic. I felt like they definitely wanted to develop a better program of collaboration with us."

McClain said the command and First Step had identical missions with respect to sexual assault.

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Sheppard AFB, TX



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The team also met with Police Chief Ken Coughlin, who praised Sheppard's reputation for cooperating with local law enforcement, said Sgt. Cindy Walker.

"The chief said the meeting went very well," Walker said. "He said that we have always had a very good relationship and cooperation with Sheppard."

No deadline has been set for when Air Force officials will release the findings from their investigation, McClain said.

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Cooking 101

Vernon College offering courses on food prep

By Trish Choate
Times Record News
February 22, 2004

--What: Two culinary arts courses - basic food preparation, and sanitation and safety

--Where: Vernon College

--When: Sanitation and safety begins Tuesday; basic food preparation begins Thursday

--Cost: \$75 for the course, plus for the cost of a textbook. "On Cooking, a Textbook of Culinary Fundamentals," cost \$105, is the textbook for basic food preparation. Military personnel can check it out.

--How to sign up: Call Vernon College at (940) 696-8752.

Spicy fried chicken fingers with chipotle dipping sauce. Cream of wild mushroom soup. Pan-fried eggplant with tomato sauce. Hearty vegetable and beef soup.

These dishes and more are on the menu for cooking students in one of Vernon College's two new culinary arts courses. A cooking academy is also on the backburner behind this first helping of culinary skills from local chefs.

A chef educated at the Culinary Arts Institute in Luxembourg has volunteered her time to teach a basic food preparation course.

"Nothing will come out of a can," Margo King-Prine said from beneath a lofty chef's hat. She's a Work Services Corp. dining hall manager at Sheppard Air Force Base.

Both the basic food preparation course and the sanitation and safety course are for people interested in being a professional or an at-home culinary artist.

Vickie Hanson, another dining hall manager, volunteered to teach safety and sanitation. Students will learn how to practice sanitary food preparation.

In King-Prine's class, students will start with basics - such as how to hold a knife.

"A lot of people don't know how to use a knife," she said. "Then we go into the basic cooking. We start with stock."



Harry Tonemah / Times Record News

Culinary art course instructor Margo King-Prine teaches Rose Cohen how to make a mushroom garnish out of a radish.



Rose Cohen is one of the 15 people currently taking the new culinary arts courses being offered by Vernon College and taught at Sheppard Air Force Base. Cohen is a supervisor at dining hall 716.

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And that's stock from scratch. After stocks come sauces - nothing from a package. Students will also learn how to identify meats and how to cut them. They'll also cook up a host of delectable dishes.

Students will learn about presentation. King-Prine jazzed up a plate of fried fish on Friday in a Sheppard dining hall.

"It's just a plain piece of catfish," she said, gesturing at the plate. "You can dress it up, put a little lemon butterfly on it."

Rose Cohen, a future student, concentrated on carving a radish into a spotted mushroom. It was to become part of a garnish basket made from a hollowed lemon and filled with green onions, red peppers and fresh rosemary.

Cohen, a WSC dining hall supervisor, was intent on making something pretty.

But she said she sees cooking as a necessary skill.

The culinary program's launch has been in the works since 1999, Al Graham, WSC project manager, said.

"We recognize the need for formal food service training in this area," he said.

With slightly more than 500 food service workers, WSC is the largest food service provider in Wichita Falls, he said.

"The majority of them came to us without any training," he said.

But she noted that only two culinary arts schools exist in the area - El Centro College in Dallas where King-Prine draws her curriculum from and another in Bartlesville, Okla.

"And there's really a need, not just for Wichita Falls, but for the surrounding communities," King-Prine said.

So local culinary professionals formed the North Texas Culinary Arts Advisory Board. Graham, King-Prine and Hanson are all board members. And the new courses are part of a collaborative effort among the WSC, other food service players and the college.

The chefs will teach in base facilities for now, but the goal is to someday have a separate kitchen, a cooking academy complete with laboratories.

"One day, we hope we are the shining star in this culinary arts program," King-Prine said.

More cooking courses are planned, she said. Students who complete requirements will receive a certificate. The board needs teachers for the other classes.

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As for the students taking the upcoming round of courses, they'll get to don spiffy chef's coats and benefit from donations of time and foodstuffs from Sysco Foods and employees.

All the students have to do is show up and get cooking. The instructors have laid tasty the groundwork for culinary arts.

"I personally have tested all these recipes," King-Prine said.

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